Impact Criteria

To begin assessing the impacts of each four-lane highway alignment, the Environmental Work Group's members proceeded to determine what criteria were most important in maintaining the environment of the region.

Methodology

Environmental Work Group members held public meetings to discuss the impacts that highway construction might have on the environment in general. To maintain participant objectivity, these discussions were held prior to the consideration of specific alternative alignments.

Environmental Work Group members then refined their initial concerns and identified others, to produce the following list of impact criteria:

Protecting endangered and threatened species and their essential habitats

Preserving natural areas, especially large continuous tracts (woodlands, prairies, wetlands, rivers, streams, lakes, springs and natural drainage ways, geological features such as sink holes, hollows, rock outcroppings, mines, mounds, nature preserves and conservation areas).

Preserving agricultural buffer areas (for wildlife corridors, open space and minimizing agricultural impacts)

Enhancing safety (tributary impacts, fog & smog, animal migration corridors, traffic flow)

Preserving scenic areas, vistas and natural contours (views, open spaces, unusual terrain)

Avoid, measure and minimize pollution (surface and ground water, siltation and runoff, air pollution and smog, visual pollution, noise pollution, light pollution)

Preserving cultural resources (historical, archaeological)

Preserving the uniqueness of the region (driftless area geology and ecology)

Work Group officers then polled their members by mail asking them to list additional criteria that would be important in maintaining the integrity of the environment. A second mailing was made to ask individuals to select three top criteria and prioritize then in order of importance. This resulted in a list of weighted criteria.

Results & Conclusions

The Environment Work Group determined that the following criteria in the following relative (weighted) order of importance should be utilized to assess the impacts of each four-lane highway alternative and to identify those with the least impacts on the environment.

Protect Natural Areas. **31.5%**

Minimize Pollution. **24.0%**

Protect Species and Habitats. **19.5%**

Preserve Contours & Vistas. **13.0%**

Preserve Area Uniqueness. **12.0%**

Impact Analysis

Methodology

Environmental Work Group members determined which criteria could be measured quantitatively and which would need to be assessed with a relative values scale, that is, a non-quantitative metric. IDOT technical studies provided quantitative values for many but not all of the Work Group's impact criteria. The technical data used was taken from the following IDOT-provided, Summary of Findings Tables for U.S. 20: "Visual/Aesthetics", "Noise/Air Quality/Cultural Resources", and "Ecological Resources Technical Report."

> *Protect Natural Areas* was quantified using the number of acres of impacted wetlands, woodlands and prairies.
>
> *Minimize Pollution* was quantified using the alignments length, the number of receptors receiving greater than 66 dBA, the number of receptors receiving an increase of more than 14 dBA, and the number of crossroads.
>
> *Protect Species & Habitats* was not quantified. A relative value scale was established for two variables, the number of species of concern and the degree of habitat fragmentation.
>
> *Preserve Contours & Vistas* was quantified using the alignment area and the number of miles of impacted Class 1 and Class 2 visual resources.
>
> *Preserve Uniqueness* was quantified using the number of impacted historic structures and the number of acres of impacted floodplain within each alignment.

Once the criteria were quantified or ranked according to a values scale, each was given a relative impact score for each alignment. Relative impacts were calculated as follows:

> *Each data set was rescaled to a value from zero to one hundred.*
>
> *The relative score is the average of these rescaled values for each criterion.*

That is, each variable within a criterion was given equal weight.

The Work Group weighting factor (see above) was applied to each relative impact score, giving a weighted impact score. Finally, each alignment was given a preference score equal to the sum of its weighted scores. The lowest preference score represents the least impact on the environment and identifies the most preferred alignment.

See Work Group Matrix attached.

Results & Conclusions

Based on our methodology for evaluating field data, the Environmental Work Group has concluded that the "Longhollow Freeway With North Simmons Mound Alternate" and the "Longhollow Freeway With South Simmons Mound Alternate" have tied for the lowest alternate preference score and thus have the least detrimental impact on the environment.

We therefore recommend, within the scope of this project, the selection of a route for U.S. Route 20, which proceeds through Longhollow. More specifically, we find we cannot support the use of Irish Hollow or Upper Irish Hollow for a freeway or an expressway.

A Work Group's complete and final evaluation of all alignments is provided above.

The Environmental Work Group recommends to the reader the following quotations from the field data, which well illustrate our criteria and our recommendations:

1. Paul Tessene, etal. Wetland Project Report, FAP 310 (US 20), 1994. "Please note that the highest concentration of floristically diverse sites is in Irish Hollow, perhaps because of the relative isolation of the sites and the larger extent of wetlands."

2. Chris Phillips. Summary of timber rattlesnake locations and possible impacts of all three alignments at US Rt. 20 (FAP 301), Memorandum, 29 July 1996. "Given the information discussed above, it is my opinion that both Irish Hollow alignments shown on Map 1 will negatively impact the habitat and the species. In my opinion, either Irish Hollow alignment shown on Map 1 will bring about the eventual extirpation of the population using the Rattlesnake Ridge den."

3. Steve Amundsen & David Enstrom. Center for Biodiversity Technical Report 1995 (5). "Irish Hollow wetlands provide habitat for many threatened and endangered species. Although wetlands make up a small percentage of the total acreage of the project corridor, there is an extensive wetland complex in Irish Hollow."

4. Chris Phillips, Center for Biodiversity Technical Report 1995(4). "The floodplain forest-seep at the northwest end of the Irish Hollow wetland complex meets all published habitat requirements for the four-toed salamander.... The Irish Hollow wetlands meet all published habitat requirements for Blanding's turtle (Emydoidea blandingii)."

5. Joyce Hofmann, etal. Center for Biodiversity Technical Report 1996(17). "Tapley Woods Conservation Area...could also be used by bobcats. Nearby to the west are tracts of upland forest in Irish Hollow...The proximity of these areas of suitable bobcat habitat in Irish Hollow increases the potential for bobcat to use Tapley Woods."

6. Jillian McColgan. June 21, 2001. Comment at public presentation of the Visual Impact Assessment study for Route 20. "...I cannot tell IDOT where to put the road, but I can certainly say where it shouldn't go, it shouldn't go down Irish Hollow."

ENVIRONMENT WORK GROUP
IMPACTS SUMMARY SHEET

GALENA TO FREEPORT

ALTERNATE ALIGNMENTS	CRITERIA (WEIGHT) PRESERVE NATURAL AREAS (31.5%)	AVOID/ MEASURE/ MINIMIZE POLLUTION (24.0%)	PROTECT ENDANGERED/ THREATENED SPECIES (18.5%)	PRESERVE SCENIC AREAS (13.0%)	PRESERVE UNIQUENESS OF REGION (12.0%)	ALTERNATE PREFERENCE SCORE
1 LONGHOLLOW FREEWAY WITH NORTH SIMMONS MOUND ALTERNATE						
RAW SCORE	2.80 281.2 0.6	46 19 15 21	4 1	2770 5 5	13 5.5	
RELATIVE IMPACT SCORE	6.2	6.6	3.5	7.9	7.0	
WEIGHTED IMPACT SCORE	2.0	1.6	0.7	1.0	0.8	6.1
2 LONGHOLLOW FREEWAY WITH SOUTH SIMMONS MOUND ALTERNATE						
RAW SCORE	2.75 280.8 0.6	50 15 15 21	4 1	3785 5 5	13 5.5	
RELATIVE IMPACT SCORE	6.2	6.8	3.5	5.0	7.0	
WEIGHTED IMPACT SCORE	2.0	1.6	0.7	1.0	0.8	6.1
3 IRISH HOLLOW FREEWAY WITH NORTH SIMMONS MOUND ALTERNATE						
RAW SCORE	5.90 265.9 0.8	90 25 43 22	7 4	2959 5 5	16 6.0	
RELATIVE IMPACT SCORE	7.5	9.6	9.2	10.1	8.1	
WEIGHTED IMPACT SCORE	2.4	2.3	1.8	1.3	1.0	8.8
4 IRISH HOLLOW FREEWAY WITH SOUTH SIMMONS MOUND ALTERNATE						
RAW SCORE	5.85 265.3 0.8	52 24 45 22	7 4	2974 5 5	16 6.0	
RELATIVE IMPACT SCORE	7.5	9.6	9.2	10.1	8.1	
WEIGHTED IMPACT SCORE	2.4	2.4	1.8	1.3	1.0	8.9
5 IRISH HOLLOW TUNNEL FREEWAY WITH NORTH SIMMONS MOUND ALTERNATE						
RAW SCORE	6.00 249.4 0.8	49 28 29 20	7 4	2914 5 4	16 6.0	
RELATIVE IMPACT SCORE	7.5	8.4	9.2	8.9	8.1	
WEIGHTED IMPACT SCORE	2.4	2.0	1.8	1.2	1.0	8.4
6 IRISH HOLLOW TUNNEL FREEWAY WITH SOUTH SIMMONS MOUND ALTERNATE						
RAW SCORE	5.95 248.8 0.8	51 25 31 21	7 4	2930 5 4	16 6.0	
RELATIVE IMPACT SCORE	7.5	8.6	9.2	8.9	8.1	
WEIGHTED IMPACT SCORE	2.4	2.1	1.8	1.2	1.0	8.5
7 UPPER IRISH HOLLOW FREEWAY WITH NORTH SIMMONS MOUND ALTERNATE						
RAW SCORE	6.73 306.8 0.8	49 24 36 24	10 3	2662 5 5	15 6.2	
RELATIVE IMPACT SCORE	8.4	9.1	9.4	8.0	8.0	
WEIGHTED IMPACT SCORE	2.6	2.2	1.8	1.0	1.0	8.6
8 UPPER IRISH HOLLOW TUNNEL FREEWAY WITH NORTH SIMMONS MOUND ALTERNATE						
RAW SCORE	8.55 280.3 0.6	46 25 22 22	10 3	2917 5 4	15 6.2	
RELATIVE IMPACT SCORE	6.5	7.9	9.4	7.4	8.0	
WEIGHTED IMPACT SCORE	2.0	1.9	1.8	1.0	1.0	8.3
9 UPPER IRISH HOLLOW FREEWAY WITH SOUTH SIMMONS MOUND ALTERNATE						
RAW SCORE	6.66 306.2 0.8	51 23 38 24	10 3	2677 5 5	15 6.2	
RELATIVE IMPACT SCORE	8.4	9.3	9.4	8.0	8.0	
WEIGHTED IMPACT SCORE	2.6	2.2	1.8	1.0	1.0	8.6
10 UPPER IRISH HOLLOW TUNNEL FREEWAY WITH SOUTH SIMMONS MOUND ALTERNATE						
RAW SCORE	6.76 289.7 0.8	50 24 24 22	10 3	2633 5 4	15 6.2	
RELATIVE IMPACT SCORE	8.3	8.1	9.4	7.4	8.0	
WEIGHTED IMPACT SCORE	2.6	1.9	1.8	1.0	1.0	8.3
11 EXPRESSWAY SOUTH ELEROY ALTERNATE						
RAW SCORE	5.44 306.3 2.4	46 33 10 24	10 3	2749 5 4.5	20 8.6	
RELATIVE IMPACT SCORE	11.9	7.6	9.4	7.6	10.9	
WEIGHTED IMPACT SCORE	3.7	1.9	1.8	1.0	1.3	9.7
12 EXPRESSWAY NORTH ELEROY ALTERNATE						
RAW SCORE	5.44 314.4 2.4	47 32 12 25	10 3	2710 5 4.5	14 11.0	
RELATIVE IMPACT SCORE	12.0	7.9	9.4	7.6	10.7	
WEIGHTED IMPACT SCORE	3.8	1.9	1.8	1.0	1.3	9.8
TOTAL RELATIVE IMPACT SCORES	100	100	100	100	100	
TOTAL WEIGHTED IMPACT SCORES	31.5	24.0	18.5	13.0	12.0	100

Note: 1) Raw scores were updated in August 2001.
2) Total scores may vary due to rounding.

U.S. Route 20 Government Work Group

Report to the Advisory Council

Paul Connor
Chairperson

John Blum
Advisory Council Representative

July 26, 2001

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Introduction

At a Public Meeting on June 17, 1993, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) called for citizens throughout Stephenson and Jo Daviess Counties to become involved in the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for a four-lane U.S. Route 20 highway, Glacier Shadow Pass, in northwest Illinois.

A total of 179 local residents attended the meeting. Everyone was asked to identify his or her primary area of interest in the region – agriculture, economic development, environment, government or tourism – and join a U.S. Route 20 Work Group to help IDOT assess the impacts of a new four-lane highway.

Those interested in joining a Work Group, around 111 individuals, met in five separate sessions. Each Work Group was asked by a facilitator to name a temporary contact person or interim coordinator for mailings and meeting notices prior to selection of a permanent chairperson and an Advisory Council representative.

Both would serve on the U.S. Route 20 Advisory Council which would assess impacts on the region as a whole and prepare recommendations regarding individual alignments for IDOT at the conclusion of the four-lane highway study. Each Work Group was asked also to help identify others who might be interested in joining the public involvement effort.

Further, to carry out their missions, the Work Groups were told they would use data from IDOT's engineering and environmental design technical studies and any other information they deemed appropriate to developing and refining criteria against which the proposed four-lane alternates could be evaluated.

In addition, Work Groups were asked to participate in an initial exercise to identify three major concerns or impacts of building a four-lane highway on their interest areas. They would report on these issues when they reconvened in the fall.

Participants were told that at the end of the project study, each Work Group would prepare a report outlining its criteria for assessing impacts and how members weighted and prioritized the criteria and then utilized them to identify alignments having the fewest negative impacts on their interest areas.

The Advisory Council would utilize the Work Groups' conclusions along with any other impacts they deemed important and formulate a regional perspective on the effects of impacts from building each alignment. Advisory Council members would prioritize alignments, focusing on those with the fewest negative impacts.

Finally, the Advisory Council would present its conclusions in a report to IDOT at the culmination of the agency's public involvement effort. The document would be included in the final EIS upon which the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) would base its decision about the construction of a four-lane highway in northwest Illinois.

Thus Work Group members began to meet periodically to carry out the task of impact assessment.

Work Group History

The Government Work Group met initially to discuss its mission, objectives, and composition and to begin defining issues or criteria of primary interest to maintaining government services. It was determined that over 300 elected and appointed government officials in the two counties should be invited to join the Work Group as well. Press releases would be used to announce all meetings.

Meetings

1993 Meeting Topics

Election of Work Group officers: Lynne Hesselbacher, Mayor of Elizabeth, chair; Deb Schleicher, Galena city government, Advisory Council representative; Jeff Winders, Guilford Township Commissioner, secretary.

Constitution, by-laws, voting rules for members. A voting member would be an elected or appointed official or representative of a tax-supported body in Jo Daviess or Stephenson County and individuals could vote in only one Work Group. IDOT traffic volume and accident data review.

Identification of the Work Group's initial top three issues for analysis in assessing highway impacts:

- location of the highway, including its effect on the existing U.S. Route 20 highway and access from the old highway and to adjacent property and roads
- provision of emergency and public services, i.e., how would the new location of the highway affect this provision and how would the new road affect existing roads
- use and maintenance of old and new highway 20.

1994 - 1995 Meeting Topics

Work Group review of proposed alignment presentations by IDOT and Louis Berger & Associates with recommendations for interchange locations; contacts with county officials regarding pending subdivision approvals; review of Work Group mission; consensus to "express the input of our constituents, not decide if a new road is needed."

Work Group recommendation for an interchange at Elizabeth-Scales Mound Road due to the high volume of traffic there and the road's ability to handle 80,000-pound truck traffic; an interchange east of Elizabeth located near (or at) Becker Road; need for two interchanges at Elizabeth for ambulance access and optimum service.

Work Group recommendation for an interchange to the west of Pleasant Hill Road allowing for a new road to be built connecting with existing Route 20 at the eastern Elizabeth village limits; recommendation that Center Road not be cut off as proposed by the current alignment; comment that closure of Vel Terra Road would landlock farms.

Review of the possibility of no access at Center and Farion Roads in Woodbine Township; avoidance of Stockton Township sewage treatment facility with the proposed highway; need for a comfort station near the Jo Daviess County line; development of a bicycle path along a new highway.

Involvement of Galena and Stockton residents and local officials in impact analysis regarding government services; appointment of Schleicher as a subcommittee chair for Galena and Gene Schamberger as a subcommittee chair for Stockton to hold meetings for discussing local concerns.

Discussion of an old railroad bed as an alignment corridor, allowing for fewer farms to be divided and requiring less right-of-way; freeway and county road maintenance responsibilities; the ultimate disposition of maintenance for existing Route 20.

Review of interchange locations near Galena with local officials and the impacts of a new highway on emergency services; Paul Conner elected as a replacement on the Advisory Council for Schleicher who had to resign the position.

Approval by members of interchanges at IL 84 north and at Galena Territory; need for an interchange on the east side of Galena to facilitate optimum accident response time; possible need for more than three state troopers to adequately patrol a freeway; request to IDOT for a speed study on existing U.S. 20 from the bridge to IL 84 north; review of traffic volume projections to 2020.

1996 - 1998 Meeting Topics

Review of land-use patterns and local zoning and planning considerations; development of criteria for assessing impacts from the Irish Hollow and Longhollow freeway alignments, the Snipe Hollow freeway alignment and an expressway alignment along existing U.S. Route 20.

Mailing of meeting invitations to over 300 local government officials; review of membership and voting requirements; quorum defined as six voting members so long as proper written notice has been given to all members prior to a meeting.

Work Group core government criteria identification (see Section IV. Impact Analysis Criteria); mailing to all local officials to expand criteria and prioritize top criteria for final analysis of impacts from building a four-lane highway in the region.

1999 - Present Meeting Topics

Selection of data sets to measure impacts for each of six criteria and 12 alternate alignment variations on government services; review of current and future land-use plans; mailing to emergency service agencies to determine adverse travel impacts of each alignment.

Working sessions with Jo Daviess and Stephenson Counties land-use planners to determine which of 12 four-lane alignment variations would be the most compatible with existing and future land-use plans; with ambulance, fire and police, county, village and township officials to determine which alignment would have the least impact on emergency services routes.

Use of manual and computer pairwise comparison data grids to determine impacts for land-use (review of land-use plans) and emergency service criteria (EMT, fire, police routes); construction of overall impacts summary table for the six criteria using the pairwise comparisons for land-use and emergency services and IDOT technical study data for community access (number and location of proposed interchanges), local government economics (tax revenues, property value changes), infrastructure (local roads and streets), and maintenance of roads (existing roads and overpasses).

Election of Paul Conner as Work Group Chair with resignation of Lynne Hesselbacher, and John Blum, Vice-Chair of the Stephenson County Board, as Advisory Council Representative to replace Paul Conner. Work Group members review of matrix with alternate preference scores and analysis of rationale for selection of alternates with least impact on local government; report preparation and presentation to the Advisory Council.

Impact Criteria

As stated earlier, to begin assessing the impacts of each four-lane highway alignment on the public services that government is responsible for, Government Work Group members had to determine what criteria were most important in maintaining the integrity of government services in the region.

Methodology

Government Work Group members held public meetings throughout the region to discuss the impacts that highway construction might have on government services in general. To maintain participant objectivity, these discussions were held prior to the consideration of specific alternate alignments.

At its August 14, 1996, meeting Government Work Group members refined their initial concerns and identified others, including:

- Old U.S. Route 20 (ownership, maintenance, costs, how much is left for local use)
- Provision for Emergency Services (EMT fire, police)
- Provision for Municipal Services
- Economics (tax revenues, property value change)
- Impact on Existing Infrastructure (local township roads, etc.)
- Compatibility With Current and Future Land-Use Plans.

Work Group officers then polled over 300 elected or appointed government officials in the region by mail asking them each to list additional criteria that would be important in maintaining the integrity of government services. A second mailing was made to ask individuals to select three top criteria, thereby weighting the criteria.

Results & Conclusions

The Government Work Group determined that the following criteria in the following relative (weighted) order of importance should be utilized to assess the impacts of each four-lane highway alternate and to identify those with the least impacts on government services.

Access to local communities	25.4%
Impacts on emergency services (EMT, fire, police routes)	22.9%
Impacts on local government economics (tax revenues, property value changes)	18.1%
ownership and maintenance of (a) existing U.S. Route 20 and (b) overpasses (state vs. local)	17.1%
compatibility with current land-use and future land-use plans	16.5%

Impact Analysis

Methodology

Government Work Group members determined which criteria could be measured quantitatively (road closures, acres, numbers of buildings, cost, etc.) and which would need to be assessed with a relative value scale or a non-quantitative analytical measure. IDOT technical studies provided quantitative values for many of the criteria.

Once the criteria were quantified or ranked according to a values scale, each was given a relative impact score for each alternate. Then the previously determined weighting factor was applied to each relative impact score, giving a weighted impact score for each criterion. Finally, a preference score was calculated for each of the twelve alternates. The alternate with the lowest preference score had the least impact on local government services.

IDOT produced an overall matrix of technical data measures for each of 12 alternates for the Work Groups to use in quantifying criteria. The Government Work Group reviewed this matrix and determined that data from the IDOT matrix could be used to quantify several of the criteria, community access and local government economics (tax revenue lost).

A values scale was developed for two criteria, *adverse travel for emergency services* (fire, police, ambulance) and the *impacts on land-use plans* using the input of local officials in these fields. For one criterion, infrastructure, data was obtained form county highway engineers to determine local roadway infrastructure construction or upgrades needed for access to each alternate. For another criteria, ownership/maintenance, data was obtained on the mileage of existing local roadways that would need to be maintained to provide access to each alternate.

In building the Government Work Group impacts summary matrix, Work Group members on a special subcommittee who met over about 18 months quantified the criteria with the following individual measures based on the rationale given:

Criteria 1: Community Assess 25.4%

Measure: The distance from the center of each community along U.S. 20 to its nearest interchange, from the IDOT matrix

Rationale: The alternates with the shortest distance from a community to the alternate would have the least impact or adverse travel time to reach communities.

Criteria 2: Emergency Services 22.9%

Measure: Each emergency service provider (fire, police, ambulance) was asked to rate, on a scale from 1 to 10, each alternate based on their travel time needed to serve the area. A workshop was held for providers to fill out pairwise comparisons for each alternate in relation to every other alternate using the values scale.

Rationale: Estimates of emergency service travel times would help determine which alternates had the least impact or adverse travel time to fulfill service needs.

Criteria 3: Local Government Economics 18.1%

Measure: The amount of tax revenue lost due to the construction of each alternate, from the IDOT matrix.

Rationale: The alternates which take the least amount of local tax revenue would have the least impact on government services in the area.

Criteria 4: Ownership / Maintenance of Existing Roadways 17.1%

Measure: The increase in the number of miles of existing roadway maintenance required by local governments for each alternate

Rationale: The alternates requiring the least amount of existing roadway maintenance needed would have the least impact on local governments.

Criteria 5: Local Land-Use Plans 16.5%

Measure: A values scale was developed to rate the compatibility of each alternate with local land-use plans. A workshop was held for local land-use planners to make pairwise comparisons of each alternate in relation to every other alternate to rate the impacts on land-use plans.

Rationale: Alternates which are most compatible with existing and future land-use plans for the area would have the least impact on local government.

The Work Group decided to drop Criteria 4, Infrastructure, from the matrix because for all alternates except the Longhollow alternates there was no impact, resulting in zero values, which skewed the results or alternate preference scores slightly. Thus, the matrix includes five criteria with the following information on infrastructure noted separately as additional information.

For the two Longhollow alternates, an estimated $1.8 million would be needed to upgrade the roadway and structures on County Highway 4 (Elizabeth-Scales Mound Road) in Jo Daviess County for approximately 4700 feet north of existing U.S. 20 near Elizabeth. If the Longhollow alternates were selected, a possible result could be increased traffic on County Highway 4 as the general public may use this as a shortcut to Elizabeth. There is no cost for upgrades to local roads associated with any other alternate.

Both the Jo Daviess and Stephenson County Highway Engineers were contacted and provided the opportunity to discuss potential impacts to the local roadways in the Counties as a result of the potential U.S. 20 alternates being studied.

See Work Group Matrix attached.

Results & Conclusions

Based on the methodology above, the Government Work Group has concluded that the following alternates have the lowest alternate preference scores and thus the least impact on local governments:

Upper Irish Hollow Freeway With South Simmons Mound Alternate (9)	Score 6.2
Upper Irish Hollow Freeway With North Simmons Mound Alternate (7)	Score 6.4
Irish Hollow Freeway With South Simmons Mound Alternate (4)	Score 6.5
Upper Irish Hollow Tunnel Freeway With South Simmons Mound Alternate (10)	Score 6.8

The alternates with the highest impacts are:

Expressway South Eleroy Alternate (11)	Score 13.8
Expressway North Eleroy Alternate (12)	Score 11.2
Irish Hollow Tunnel Freeway With North Simmons Mound Alternate (5)	Score 9.3
Longhollow Freeway With North Simmons Mound Alternate (1)	Score 9.3

The Government Work Group concludes that the Upper Irish Hollow Freeway With South Simmons Mound Alternate (9) and the Upper Irish Hollow Freeway With North Simmons Mound Alternate (7) have the least impact on local government in Stephenson and Jo Daviess Counties.

In review of the process by which these recommendations have been made, we have taken out much of the emotional response to this project. By using a methodical mathematical approach for reviewing the alternate routes we removed subjectivity and emotionally driven responses. Building a project of this scope will create many challenges for people whose property lies in and along the routes that have been reviewed. The goal of the Government Work Group was to assess these alternates and their collective effect on government services in the communities involved. Our conclusions are based on criteria that collectively the group felt to be most important.

In conclusion, the overall results of this process will stand on the merits of the Environmental Impact Statement. The participation of the members of the Government Work Group helped to bring observations and recommendations to this study from many segments of our communities. The participation and contribution of the members helped to build a collective that provided the direction that is presented in this report.

Our goal as we move forward should be to take action on this plan and bring to the next generation a safer, more effective means of transportation to this region. Everyone that has participated in this process has contributed in some way to shape the project. It may not be the perfect fit for each individual, but it is a fit that will serve the collected communities with the least amount of negative impact and the most amount in positive opportunities for everyone as we move forward in this region.

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